HNCA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
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ANITA CHAPMAN

NEW YORK TIMES EDUCATION SURVEY

ANNCR:

IN ITS EDITION OF LAST SUNDAY, THE NEW YORK TIMES DEVOTED A SPECIAL SECTION TO A SURVEY OF TRENDS IN AMERICAN EDUCATION. WITH SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SURVEY, HERE IS VOA'S ANITA CHAPMAN:

VOICE:

IT'S BEEN SAID THE UNITED STATES OFFERS MORE YEARS OF FREE EDUCATION TO A LARGER NUMBER OF ITS CITIZENS THAN ANY OTHER COUNTRY. YET NOT ALL CHILDREN HAVE FIT NEATLY INTO THE "ONE EDUCATION FOR ALL" PATTERN ACCORDING TO THE NEW YORK TIMES. THE TWO GROUPS TO HAVE FARED LEAST WELL ARE THE HANDICAPPED AND THE GIFTED.

BUT NOW THE TREND IS TOWARD SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR BOTH GROUPS, NOTES THE TIMES. IN FACT, PARENTS OF THE HANDICAPPED AND GIFTED HAVE MADE COMMON CAUSE AND FOUGHT IN THE COURTS FOR THAT EQUAL RIGHTS LAWS PASSED DURING THE NINETEEN SIXTIES. THE COURT CASES HAVE BEEN WON AND THE EFFECT HAS BEEN TO INFUSE LARGE SUMS OF FEDERAL FUNDS INTO THE SPECIAL TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT NEEDED.

THERE ARE NEARLY EIGHT MILLION HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN THE COUNTRY. ADEQUATE EDUCATION PROGRAMS, AS THE TIMES POINTS OUT, EXIST FOR ONLY HALF OF THEM. GIFTED CHILDREN ARE ESTIMATED AT SOME TWO MILLION. ONLY TEN PERCENT ARE GETTING ANY SPECIAL TRAINING IN THE PUBLIC SYSTEM. AND YET, AS THE TIMES INDICATES, THE TALENT OF THESE GIFTED CHILDREN REPRESENTS A "MAJOR NATIONAL RESOURCE FROM WHICH LEADERSHIP IN MANY FIELDS CAN EXPECT TO BE DRAWN".

THE CURRENT TREND IS TO PUT PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED AND GIFTED CHILDREN IN REGULAR SCHOOLS, BUT ALLOW TIME EACH DAY FOR PROGRAMS GEARED TO THEIR NEEDS. THIS IS CALLED "MAIN-STREAMING", THAT IS, LETTING A CHILD BE WITH THE MASS OF CHILDREN EVEN THOUGH HE'S DIFFERENT. IT IS A REVERSAL OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY CONCEPT OF ISOLATING THOSE WHO ARE DIFFERENT. EDUCATION PSYCHOLOGISTS SAY THE MIX WILL MAKE SCHOOLS A HEALTHIER LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR EVERYONE.

THE NEW YORK TIMES ALSO HAS SOME DOWN TO EARTH ADVICE FOR PARENTS FACING THE TRAUMA OF GETTING THEIR CHILDREN INTO COLLEGES AND GRADUATE SCHOOLS. THE TIMES LISTS PUBLICATIONS AND SERVICES THAT CAN HELP PARENTS IN WHAT IT CALLS THE "CAMPAIGN" TO GET YOUNG PEOPLE ACCEPTED INTO OVERCROWDED, FIRST-CLASS UNIVERSITIES, AND MEDICAL AND LAW SCHOOLS.

THE TIMES OVERVIEW OF EDUCATION ALSO HIGHLIGHTS THE RISE OF JEWISH SCHOOLS, AS PARENTS SEEK ALTERNATIVES TO THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM. TIMES REPORTERS ANALYZE THE STILL-MYSTERIOUS DISABILITIES CHILDREN SUFFER FROM IN LEARNING, THE ROLE CHILDREN PLAY IN AMERICAN CULTURE, AND THE WAYS THAT HIDDEN TALENTS OF MINORITY CHILDREN ARE BEING DISCOVERED.

ON A COMIC-SERIOUS NOTE, THE TIMES OUTLINES ONE PROFESSOR'S ANSWER TO CLASS BOREDOM. AN AUTHORITY ON ZOOLOGY, HE DRESSES IN THE COSTUME OF THE PERIOD WHEN DESCRIBING THE WORK OF GREAT SCIENTISTS SUCH AS CHARLES DARWIN, WHO SAW MAN LINKED GENETICALLY WITH THE GREAT APES. ONE DAY A GREAT APE WAS SITTING IN THE FIRST ROW OF CLASS DURING THE LECTURE. "OH, I KNEW IT WAS A STUDENT," SAID THE PROFESSOR AFTERWARDS, "BECAUSE IT WAS TAKING NOTES."

AND THESE ARE SOME NOTES OF THE CURRENT TRENDS IN EDUCATION, AS SEEN IN THE PAGES OF THE NEW YORK TIMES.

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